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for below the judgment of his peers there was no other guide but conscience." "Precisely to such bodies of inexorable critics did the intrinsic strength of the work of Professor Packard ultimately appeal."[2] The American Academy of Arts and Sciences elected him to membership in 1868; the Société Royale des Sciences de Liège, 1875; the Society of Friends of Natural Science in Moscow, in 1891. In 1891 he was elected foreign member of the Linnean Society of London. He was elected also to membership in the entomological societies of London, Paris, St. Petersburg, Stockholm and Brussels; was made one of the honorary presidents of the International Zoölogical Congress in Paris, 1899; honorary president of the Zoölogical Section of the French Association for the Advancement of Sciences; vice-president (1899) of the corresponding Section of the American Association.

A. D. MEAD.

BENJAMIN OSGOOD PEIRCE (1854–1914)

Fellow in Class I, Section 2, 1884.

The following biographical notice of Professor Benjamin Osgood Peirce is taken for the most part from the Minute on his life and services which was placed on the records of the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the meeting of February 17, 1914. A much more extended biography will be published by the National Academy of Sciences.

Our colleague, Benjamin Osgood Peirce, who died in Cambridge on the fourteenth of January, 1914, was born in Beverly, Massachusetts, February 11, 1854, of a family belonging for several generations to the city of Salem. Of his ancestors, Richard Norman came to Gloucester in 1623, John Peirce to Watertown in 1637, John and Christopher Osgood to other parts of eastern Massachusetts before 1640. John Peirce had a son Robert, but after the Cromwellian era names taken from the Old Testament prevail in the family, and it is hard to refrain from using the robust terms of the Old Testament genealogies in reciting the generations that follow. The son of Robert was Benjamin, and the son of Benjamin was Jerathmiel, and the son of Jerathmiel was Benjamin, 2d, who fell at Lexington, and his son was Benjamin, 3d, whose son was Benjamin Osgood, 1st, the father of our friend.

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[2] Carl Barus, Memorial Address.

From Jerathmiel, potent name, were descended also Jerathmiel, 2d, and his son Benjamin, Librarian of Harvard College from 1826 to 1831, and his son Benjamin, Tutor or Professor of Mathematics at Harvard from 1831 to 1880, among whose sons were James Mills, also Professor of Mathematics at Harvard; and Charles Sanders, projector of the philosophic cult of Pragmatism. In the annals of intellectual achievement in America there is no greater name than Peirce.

The father of our colleague was a graduate of Waterville College in Maine. He married, in 1841, Miss Mehetable Osgood Seccomb, a native of Salem, whom he had met for the first time in Georgia, where both were engaged in teaching. After his marriage Mr. Peirce remained for several years in the South as Professor of Chemistry and Natural Philosophy at Mercer. Returning to Massachusetts in 1849, he engaged in the South African trade, and in 1864 he visited the Cape of Good Hope, taking his son with him.

When the son was sixteen years of age and a graduate of the Beverly High School, he developed an indisposition to study, a phenomenon which must have seemed a portent in his household. He was accordingly apprenticed to learn carpentry, and he worked for two years at this trade, an experience which was doubtless to his advantage in various ways.

The boy having proved a faithful apprentice received in 1872 permission to go to Harvard. He devoted himself to his studies with great zeal for the next two or three months in preparation for the College examinations, which he took all at one time in September, 1872, and he was then admitted to Harvard, with a condition, it is said, in some particular of elementary mathematics. He did not have a college room, but lived with his family in a rather distant part of Cambridge, whence he ran a telegraph line to the room of two classmates and intimate friends, Lefavour and Pine, in one of the College Halls. It is said that his health was somewhat impaired for a time by his too severe labor in preparation for the admission examinations, and it is not improbable that he established the telegraphic communication with his friends by way of diversion during this indisposition. Illness was usually for him an opportunity to do something which he might not have found time for in health.

His first scientific paper, *On the Induction Spark Produced in Breaking a Galvanic Circuit between the Poles of a Magnet,* was printed in the Proceedings of this Academy, having been presented February 9, 1875, about the middle of his Junior year in college.

He graduated at Harvard in 1876, ranking second in his class for the whole course, his friend Lefavour being first. He remained at Harvard for a year more, as an assistant to Professor Trowbridge in the Physical Laboratory, and then went to Leipsic, where he received the degree of Ph.D. in 1879. After a year in the University of Berlin, and a year of teaching Mathematics in the Boston Latin School, he returned to Harvard as Instructor in Mathematics. In 1884 he was made Assistant Professor of Mathematics and Physics, and in 1888, on the retirement of Professor Lovering, he became Hollis Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. At the time of his death he was a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a member of the American Physical Society (its President during the last year of his life), of the American Philosophical Society, of the American Mathematical Society (Vice-president in 1913), of the Astronomical and Astrophysical Society of America, of the National Academy of Sciences, of the Société Française de Physique, and of the Circolo Matematico di Palermo.

He married in 1882 Miss Isabella Turnbull Landreth of Edinburgh, whom he had met when she was a student at the Leipsic Conservatory. Intimacy with her brothers, all ministers of the Scotch Church, has been one of the happy relations of this marriage. His wife and his two daughters survive him.

Our colleague was a great scholar and a remarkable man. Big and powerful of body, and ambidextrous, he was in mind also capable and proficient far beyond the ordinary measure of his fellows. He seemed to grasp with equal ease and to retain with equal tenacity the profoundest generalizations of mathematics or physics and the smallest bits of information likely to be of service in his work. He always knew the best materials and the best tools to use and the best way to use them. Fertile in ideas, strong of purpose, ceaseless, literally so, in industry, businesslike by instinct and tradition from his merchant ancestors, sympathetic and generous beyond the wishes of his friends, he was a mighty, beneficent, and genial power, wherever he took his stand; and he was successful, as few men are successful, in winning the confidence, the admiration, and the affection of those with whom he was associated.

His work, always masterly, thorough, and important, was never of a kind, in subject or in treatment, to flare upon the attention of the public; but whenever he made the acquaintance of a mathematician or a physicist of the first rank, like the late Sir George Darwin, he was recognized as a fellow and a peer. Professor Andrew Gray of Glasgow says, "All mathematicians and physical workers in this country looked up to him as a leader of thought and investigation in America." Sir Joseph Larmor speaks of "the increasing company over here who knew and appreciated him personally" and of "the still larger number who knew only his scientific work." Karl Pearson, who was a fellow student with Peirce in Germany, writes, "Benjamin Osgood Peirce was representative of all that was best in science; he was never a self-seeker nor a self-advertiser, and I learnt more from him than from many of our professed teachers in Berlin."... "If I had to give the name of the man who represented America best to me, I should still say, after thirty-four years, Benjamin Osgood Peirce." It is plain from these quotations that the reputation of our friend was increasing at the time of his death.

Eminent in his profession, beyond its wide limits he was an outstanding personality to all who knew him well. He was a prodigious reader, and once told the present writer that he had read the Encyclopedia Britannica through several times. He was fond of meeting classical scholars on their own ground; not long before his death he quoted Ovid fluently and evinced a lively interest in the psychology of the Greek Optative. His service for many years as a member of the Harvard Committee on Honors and Higher Degrees in Music was justified by his extraordinary musical sensibility and his appreciation, intuitive as well as learned, of musical compositions. He made music in various ways, some of them rather surprising.

In a place and a time of the least restraint in religious matters he quietly declined to enter upon discussions of personal religious belief, and, though perhaps shaken at times by the same tremendous questions which beset Carlyle, he remained steadfastly in the Baptist communion to which his father had belonged. With characteristic force of grotesque phrase he described the varieties of belief which were exhibited in Appleton Chapel after the breaking up of the World's Congress held at Chicago, in 1893, as "a job lot of religions." These words indicated no bitterness or bigotry, but merely his conviction of the needlessness and uselessness of seeking abroad for religious doctrine or spiritual inspiration. At the last his own faith and trust were serene.

Peirce was proverbial among his friends for a certain habit of extravagant self-depreciation and for a frolicsome humor of speech and action. His self-depreciation was partly caution, partly genuine modesty, of which he had great store, partly an endeavor, not always successful, to make others content with themselves, and partly it was a humorous pose. A man of his intelligence could not be altogether unaware of the scope of his own powers, and a man of his keen sympathy could not be indifferent to the appreciation of his fellows. If he found that his habitual professions of ignorance concerning matters of which he was a master were being taken seriously, he speedily took effectual measures to remove the false impression.

His habit of humorously grotesque speech was the natural outcome of abounding energy, lively invention, and an amiable desire to entertain; but it was sometimes also a measure of precaution, intended to prevent the discovery and invasion of his real thought. For, with all his genuine and hearty good-fellowship, Peirce was a man of profound reserve; he was wont to go into his closet and shut the door, and his privacy was respected. Behind his superficial timidity and his abounding kindliness there was always the suggestion of something formidable, and he was not a man to be trifled with.

Peirce's last scientific paper, *The Maximum Value of the Magnetization in Iron,* June, 1913, was, like his first paper, printed in the Proceedings of this Academy. This was, indeed, his customary channel of publication, and all the members of the Academy may well be proud of this fact.

EDWIN H. HALL.